STRIKING THE BALANCE

B. C. PARKS POLICY

JANUARY 1988

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From the Minister of Environment and Parks

The year 1986 marked the 75th anniversary of B.C. Parks, and 17 million park visitors helped us celebrate. From that perspective, it is appropriate to review the wisdom and experience gained from the past and crystallize how provincial parks are administered on your behalf, in the form of a policy statement.

There has never been a formal policy statement about B.C. Parks before. There are many reasons for producing one now.

First, and foremost, concerned British Columbians have asked many questions recently about the purpose of provincial parks and why they are managed as they are. This document is meant to provide some answers.

Second, public support and understanding are crucial elements in the creation and management of any good park system. In order to serve the changing outdoor recreation needs of British Columbians, discussion is necessary. This document can form the basis for such exchanges.

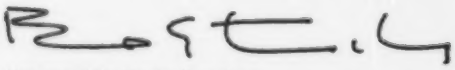
Third, B.C. Parks is at a significant point in its history. At nearly full growth, attention will be shifting from assembling the lands that constitute the park system to ensuring their conservation for perpetuity. As the numbers of park visitors increase and dramatic changes in outdoor recreation take place, a flexible and expanded management strategy is required.

And finally, there are fixed limits to this province's natural resources. The very resources which are the pillars of provincial parks are often the same commercial resources which strengthen the economy. In response to this competition for finite resources, a direction for B.C. Parks must be clearly identified and followed.

Striking the Balance is intended to help you better understand what the government policy is for B.C. Parks and the principles which underlie management decisions. In addition, because goals are outlined, you will have the means to gauge how well the job of management of the provincial parks system is being carried out over the years ahead.

As the Minister responsible for B.C. Parks, I am committed to the task of creating a provincial park system that both serves the changing needs of British Columbians and conserves this heritage for future park visitors to enjoy equally well. A balance must be struck.

Striking the Balance, as a policy, is not an end, but a beginning to discussions about how to make our world-class park system even better. We need your participation in these discussions. I look forward to receiving your comments and hearing your views.



Honourable Bruce Strachan
Minister of Environment and Parks
January 1988

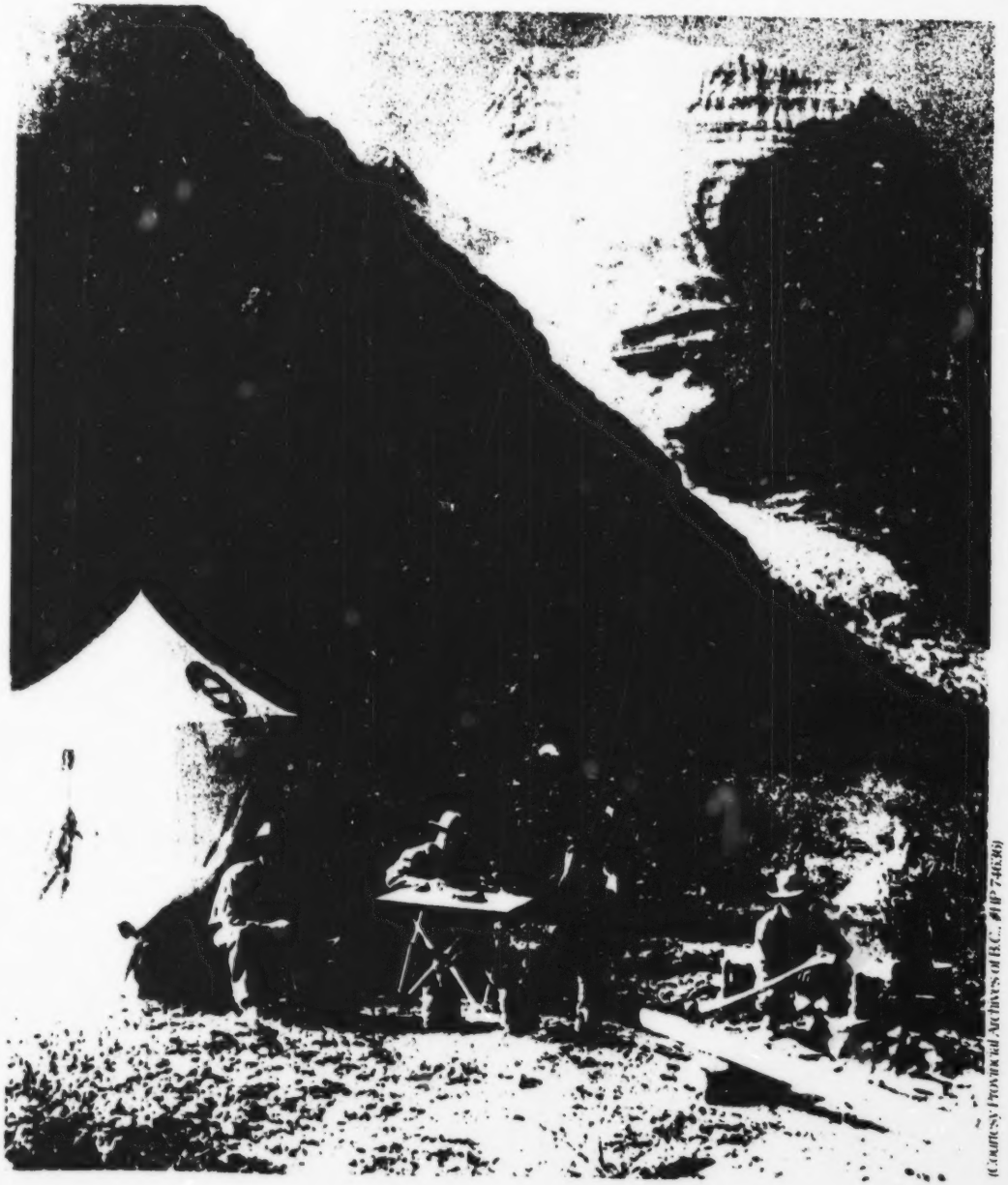
Our Commitment to You

The lands and the cultural and natural resources of our park system are dedicated to the people of British Columbia. The staff responsible for park management are committed to serving you and your visitors by:

- conserving and managing for future generations a wide variety of outstanding park lands which represent the best natural recreation features and diverse wilderness environments of the province.
- providing province-wide opportunities for a diversity of high quality and safe outdoor recreation, that is compatible with conserving the natural environment.

Your understanding and support is essential if we are to meet these commitments. Park staff will strive to work co-operatively with the residents of the province and their visitors, volunteer groups and private businesses, to plan and manage B.C. Parks for the benefit of present and future generations.

1. A PARK SYSTEM SHAPED BY ITS PAST



Courtesy Provincial Archives of B.C., #HP 74638

Camp at Mount Robson about 1913

Why Parks?

Of what value are parks? For society, parks are a heritage, a way to share the finest natural environments today, then pass them on to posterity. For communities, parks may mean employment, near-by recreation spots or distant vacations. For the individual, parks offer solitude, physical challenge, and spiritual renewal.

Parks are selected and cherished for their natural beauty, and in British Columbia we are blessed with exquisite environments to choose from: mountains . . . coastlines . . . caves . . . lakes and rivers . . . historic sites . . . wildlife and vegetation . . . places of international significance.

It is our aim to capture these spectacular environments within the provincial park system. Today, we have reason to be proud. Nowhere else will you find so many exceptional parks – for the recreation opportunities they offer, the wilderness they preserve, and the natural resources they encompass. B.C. Parks rank with the best.

(Credit: D. Bernu)

Hakai Recreation Area

(B.C. Government photo)

Turner Lake and Hunlen Falls, Tweedsmuir Park

(B.C. Government photo)

Eve Cone, a volcano in Mount Edziza Park

(B.C. Government photo)

Princess Louisa Marine Park

(B.C. Government photo)

Gold River, Strathcona Park

A Short History

Credit Provincial Archives of B.C., #HB57120

Della Lake, Strathcona Park, 1913

In 75 years, B.C. Parks have evolved into a park system of 5.4 million hectares. It has matured not only in size but philosophy.

The original provincial parks were created to encourage *tourism*. Strathcona, our first provincial park established in 1911, was quickly followed by other pioneer parks such as Mount Robson and Garibaldi. They were vast, spectacular and wild lands selected with the hope of starting a tourist boom in the western reaches of the continent.

In later eras, provincial parklands were meant to fill public demands for *recreation* and *tourism*. Many parks, such as Miracle Beach or Okanagan Lake, were developed along new highways to meet a spiralling need for roadside stops, campgrounds and holiday destinations during the auto-touring years of the 1950s and 60s. Similarly, marine parks were created as boating gained popularity.

While conservation of natural resources has always been a concern, it was not until the Park Act was passed in 1965 that provincial parks gained a strong *conservation* mandate. The purpose of setting aside common lands – *"for preservation of their natural environments for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of the public"* – is little changed to this day.

However, this mandate became further refined as it became clear that the park system could not grow indefinitely, due to competition for natural

resources. So the selection of new parks focussed on areas that represented the best features and diversity of B.C.

History has shaped more than the acquisition of lands for the park system. Over time, our park system has developed with boundary adjustments and a flexibility to social requirements. During periods when stimulating the economy was paramount, parks have been opened to resource extraction. Today, all *Parks* are closed to such activities, but a very few of these commercial commitments remain legally binding.

In summary, there are strong, continuous threads tying B.C. Parks to its past and making it different from other park systems. Our provincial parks are set aside for recreational use . . . but also for conservation. They have a role both in attracting tourists . . . and in preserving wilderness. They include many of B.C.'s best natural features . . . but also have a legacy of legal commitments to resource extraction which must be dealt with.

In total, what is important to us now, as stewards of the system, is how to strike a balance for the future. The next sections deal with how we are currently managing provincial parks and how we propose to chart a course through the future.

The growth of a Park System

2. MANAGING B.C. PARKS TODAY

Garibaldi Park

Tools That Guide Us

The Park Act

The Park Act is powerful legislation. It names a Minister responsible for all of the resources within park boundaries, and names a Parks Branch to administer the Act.

The Act clearly states that the park system will both protect the natural environment and provide recreation opportunities. Managing the system, therefore, involves balancing these two fundamental objectives.

Changes in park lands are made by an Order-in-Council or by passing an amendment to the Park Act.

The Park Act has the force of law. As managers, we are guided by its principles, which translate into regulations which can be legally enforced.

Park Classifications

While all parks are highly protected lands and managed to equally-high standards, there are some important distinctions indicated through a park's classification.

Class A Parks (Provincial Parks)
The majority of our parks are *Class A*. Dedicated to the recreational enjoyment of all residents, these lands are entirely free of commercial resource harvesting. They set the standard by which B.C. Parks have become world-renowned.

Recreation Areas
There are park reserves in the system temporarily classified as *Recreation Areas* because they either:

- have resource commitments within their boundaries from earlier history (e.g., mineral claims in Strathcona Recreation Area) or
- are having a mineral resource evaluation done under a time-limited tenure (e.g., Wokkpash Recreation Area).

In either case, no new commercial logging will be allowed and these lands may become Class A parks on resolution of the tenures or on completion of the evaluation.

Class C Parks
Class "C" or community parks make up a small percentage of our system and are gradually being turned over to municipal and regional governments for administration.

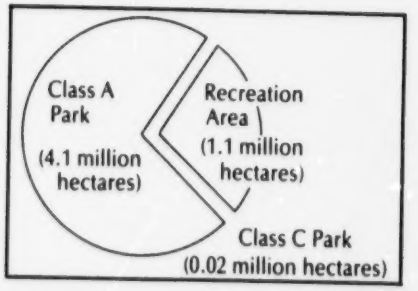
Our ultimate goal is to have all major lands within the system designated as Class A Parks.

Planning

The park system as a whole is guided by a *system plan*, which sets goals for an overall conservation/recreation balance and identifies potential park lands yet to be added to the system.

Park management plans (master plans) complement the system plan. Resources within a park are inventoried, assessed, and actions identified for balancing recreation and conservation within the park over the long-term.

Within each park management plan, the park is divided into *zones*. Zones describe access, facilities and recreation activities compatible with the natural resources found in a specific area, so that the recreation/conservation balance is maintained throughout the park.



Nearly all park lands fit within 2 classifications.

Park Zones

Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park

Wilderness Zone

Myrtle Lake, Wells Gray Park

Nature Conservancy Zone

Management Objective	To provide for backcountry recreation in a remote natural environment, with emphasis on a wilderness atmosphere.	To protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and provide backcountry experiences based on a pristine environment.
Compatible Activities & Facilities	Backpacking, river rafting, fishing, hunting, nature appreciation, etc. Facility development limited to user convenience and protecting the environment. e.g., trails, primitive campsites, shelters, etc. Mechanized access may be allowed to specific points.	As for Wilderness Zone, but NO hunting and NO mechanized access allowed. No facility development.

French Beach Park

Moyie Lake Park

Natural Environment Zone	Intensive Recreation Zone	Integrated Resource Use Zone (in Recreation Areas only)
To provide for a variety of easily-accessible off-road outdoor recreation activities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.	To provide for a variety of high-use, readily-accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation activities.	To provide for the integration of recreation and industrial uses in a recreation area while protecting existing outdoor recreation values, and to ultimately achieve Class A park status for these lands.
Walk-in camping, kayaking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, etc. Facilities are moderately developed. e.g., trails, boat-in campsites, shelters, etc.	Camping, picnicking, beach activities, power-boating, nature appreciation, skiing, fishing, etc. Facilities may be intensely developed. e.g., campgrounds, play areas, interpretive buildings, boat launches, etc.	

Public Involvement

Your comments, requirements and participation play an important role in the management of our park heritage.

In preparing park plans, public input is typically a part of the process. Public knowledge and opinions are collected and used in preparing a draft plan. The draft is then circulated for public review, and we may hold open houses, workshops, or group discussions to better hear your views.

In managing B.C. Parks, we also pay attention to the ideas and needs of park visitors through less formal methods. Visitor satisfaction surveys and special opinion surveys, responding to letters and meeting with groups and individuals give us a province-wide picture of how we can serve you and chart a course for the future.

Park Staff

Our committed, highly-trained and dedicated staff, with their accumulated years of experience in the field, in support functions and in administration, are one of our best guides to good park management strategies.

Garibaldi Park

Our Commitment To Conservation

We are committed to conserving and managing for future generations a wide variety of outstanding park lands which represent the best natural recreation features and diverse wilderness environments of the province. How we accomplish this is based on the following principles.

Protecting and enhancing the natural resources of a park is foremost

- Outstanding natural resources are the qualities which make our parks of provincial stature. Our primary concern as managers is the long-term protection, management and enhancement of all park resources.

Values are identified before actions are taken

- Extensive inventories to identify the resources, and other studies precede our management actions. For example, in Ruckle Park, a comprehensive review of the human history was done to ensure these values are recognized in the master plan. In Sunshine Meadows in Mount Assiniboine Park, a visitor-use impact study preceded an action plan to protect the sensitive environment through a trails and information program to accommodate over 10,000 visitors annually.

Protecting rare and endangered species is of high importance

- We protect unique, rare or endangered species. This may be done through protecting the habitat, restricting development in an area or managing potential conflicts with recreation. For example, in Kokanee Glacier Park, studies of grizzly bear habitat resulted in trail and campground changes to reduce potential conflicts between visitors and bears. Other studies such as in Valhalla Park, can identify critical grizzly habitats and protect them, before any facilities are provided.

(Credit: W.C. Shaw)

Human history preserved in Ruckle Park

(B.C. Provincial Museum photo)

Phantom orchid, one of the rarest plants in B.C., protected in Cultus Lake Park

Ensuring public safety is of high importance

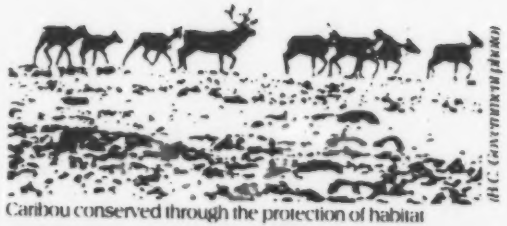
- We manage park resources for public safety. For example, in all campgrounds, hazardous trees are removed; at Helmcken Falls in Wells Gray Park, fencing and signs are placed at dangerous drop-offs and where heavy visitor use is expected.

Sustaining natural resources for perpetuity is essential

- In the case of activities such as fishing and hunting, we manage the resources and activities so that they can be sustained perpetually. First priority is that the population not be endangered. Second, that the recreation activity be sustained. For example, where hunting is permitted in Spatsizi Wilderness Park, it is carefully controlled well below biologically sustainable harvest limits.

Cooperation with other agencies and resource users is our approach

- We work closely with other agencies to manage resources within a provincial context. For example, our hunting regulations are set and managed cooperatively with the Wildlife Branch. The management of insect pests, which affect park vegetation, requires inter-agency co-ordination such as the spruce budworm control program done with the Forest Service in Paul Lake Park.



Caribou conserved through the protection of habitat

Tagging sockeye salmon with federal fisheries staff. Adams River, Roderick Haig-Brown Recreation Area.

Natural processes prevail whenever feasible

- We allow natural ecosystems to evolve from stage to stage. However, in some parks, one stage may be arrested and managed for its outstanding value. For example, Cathedral Grove in MacMillan Park is being preserved as an outstanding example of old growth coastal Douglas fir. In another park, such as Wells Gray, caribou habitat is being preserved because it is disappearing outside park boundaries, and is therefore critical for wildlife preservation.

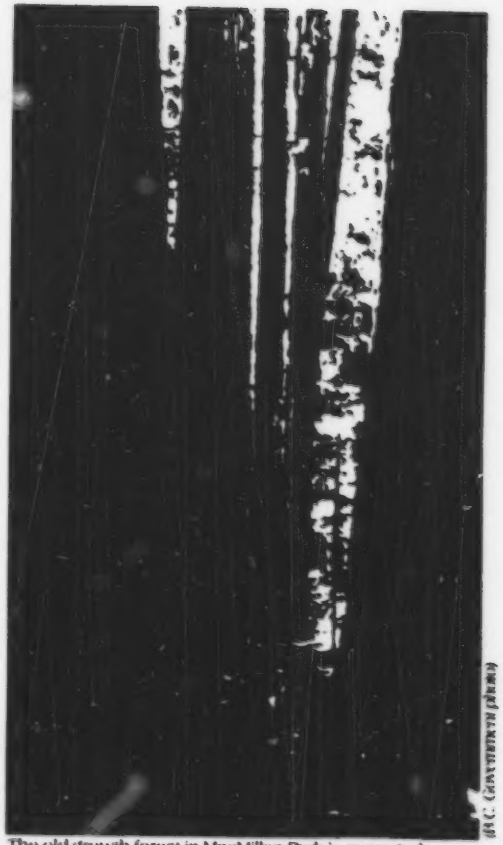
Fire can be used as a management technique

- Fire has shaped the forests seen today in our parks. In the last 50 years, we successfully fought most fires. However, this is changing park ecosystems; now we are amending our practices – but managing fire is complicated.

  Wildfires will not be fought in wilderness areas unless they threaten the value of the park's resources or those adjacent to the park. For example, in 1986, a natural fire was allowed to burn in Tweedsmuir Park, letting this natural process shape the ecosystem. On the other hand, in Cathedral Park, we have deliberately set fires to improve sheep range.

Insect infestation and disease is attacked where the threat is serious

- We consider insect pests and disease to be natural forces, and control actions are not taken unless the value of the park's resources or those adjacent to the park are threatened and only where there is a reasonable chance of success. While we continue to experiment with biological and mechanical controls



B.C. Government photo

The old growth forest in MacMillan Park is managed to preserve its outstanding value.

Managing resource commitments requires special action

we recognize that pesticides are still the most effective control in most situations.

- Legal commitments within park boundaries are regulated by special permit and our role as managers is to see that high standards for protecting park values are maintained during such activities.

  In the case of lands with pre-existing commitments such as mineral claims and timber licences, we attempt to acquire these tenures or to manage them carefully until they are extinguished. For example, in Tweedsmuir and Strathcona Recreation Areas we are buying pre-existing mineral claims which can then become part of the park.

  In contrast, in Cathedral Park, cattle grazing will continue, without expansion, until the commitment is fulfilled.

  Other commitments within parks, such as rights-of-way, communication sites, and hydro lines, are also managed to minimize their impacts. For example, we study the impact of potential hydro lines on the scenic values of any park before work is done.

Lands may be added to the park system before the extent and value of their sub-surface resources are known. In newly established recreation areas we will permit time-limited mineral claims to be staked in order for a resource evaluation to take place. There is a minimum 10-year period before we may seek to redesignate the land to Class A Park. Our management role is to strictly control this process to ensure that minimum environmental impacts affect the land during the course of exploration.

Our Commitment to Recreation

In maintaining the recreation side of the balance, we are committed to providing province-wide opportunities for a diversity of high quality and safe outdoor recreation that is compatible with conserving the natural environment.

B.C. Parks fill a special role in outdoor recreation. We serve every resident and their visitors. We offer the province's best natural settings and the highest quality recreation facilities. The possibilities for recreation are limitless – as long as they combine with the conservation purpose of provincial parks, with other visitor activities, and with the experience of recreating in a natural (as opposed to a man-made) setting.

While municipal parks serve as local recreation spots, and national parks place preservation foremost, provincial parks strike a balance between the two.

How we accomplish this is based on the following principles of recreation management.

Mount Assiniboine Park

Conserving the recreation resource is foremost

Mount Assiniboine Park

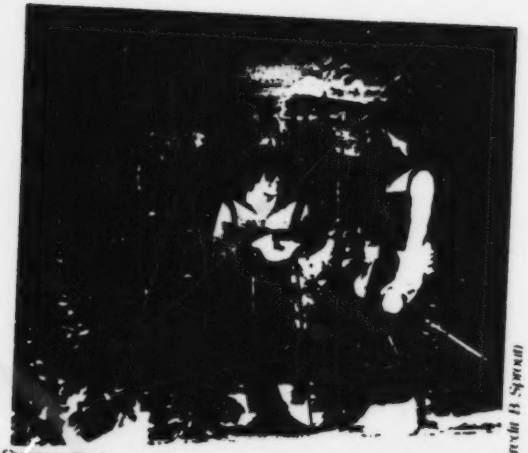
- We manage parks to provide outstanding recreation without diminishing the value of the natural resources: use without misuse or overuse. For example, the locations where backcountry campers may pitch tents in heavily-used wilderness areas, such as Taylor Meadows in Garibaldi Park, are designated. The number of canoeists allowed in any party in Bowron Lake Park is limited to 6 people.

Bugaboo Glacier Park and Alpine Recreation Area

Responding to public demand is key

- We ask visitors what they need and enjoy in parks and aim to provide the facilities and services requested, in the appropriate park zone. For example, in response to a 1986 visitor survey, showers were added to 11 campgrounds.

  As public trends in outdoor recreation alter, so will our facilities and services.



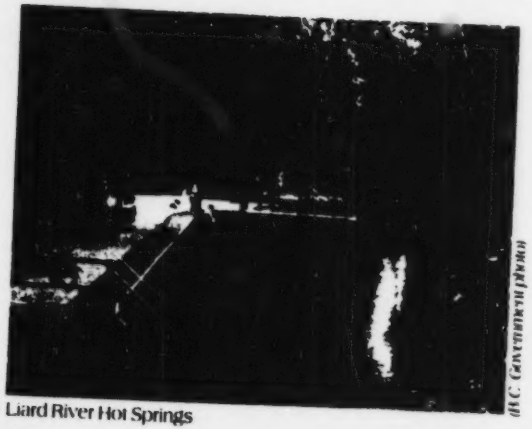
Cypress Park

Maintaining high quality and visitor satisfaction is essential

- We are committed to service of the highest quality, so that B.C.'s park system remains world-class. We aim for consistently high visitor satisfaction ratings.

Providing the appropriate level and type of facilities and services is our aim

- We determine those services and facilities appropriate to a particular natural setting and the experiences that visitors have come to find. For the wilderness camper seeking solitude and challenge in the backcountry, this means providing simple trail access, safety, and a primitive campsite. In a park such as Rathtrevor Beach, the family camper requires more sophisticated facilities; an elaborate campground is provided.



Liard River Hot Springs

Providing safety and security is essential

- We recognize that safety and security are important concerns of park visitors. So we design and manage facilities to high standards of public health and safety. Parks are managed to ensure safety, security and tranquillity, through setting and enforcing regulations, through employing security staff in campgrounds and backcountry rangers.

Complementing other recreation services and agencies is standard practise

- We ensure that facilities and services in parks complement those already existing in the vicinity of the park and those through the park system as a whole. These include private-sector and other agency-operated ventures. Such cooperation results in better service to park visitors, and some wonderful added opportunities – like fly-in fishing camps in Tweedsmuir Park or commercial horse outfitters in Spatsizi Wilderness Park.

Providing for a variety of activities is a rule of thumb

- We manage the park system to provide activities for all seasons, ages and levels of expertise. For example, trails for snowmobiles are found in Silver Star Recreation Area; houseboats are an attraction in Shuswap Lake Marine Parks.

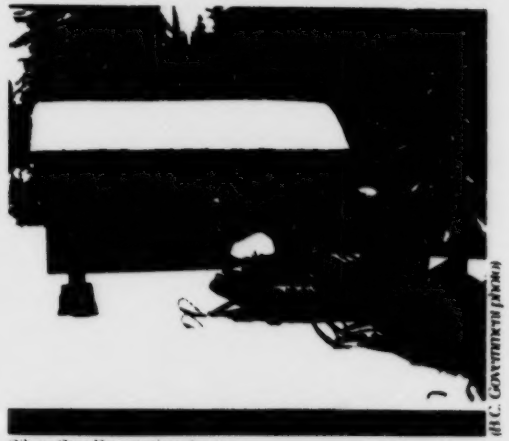
  Not all activities can occur in each park. However, we manage the system as a whole to see that each resident has good access to outdoor recreation in superlative natural settings.

Managing cost-effectively is essential

- We manage parks to deliver recreation at the lowest cost-per-visitor ratio of any provincial park system in Canada, by careful monitoring and planning, by the use of volunteers, and by working with the private sector and contractors. We intend to remain the leader.

(Credit: T.A. Wallen)

Commercial outfitters, Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park



(B.C. Government photo)

Silver Star Recreation Area.

Mount Assiniboine Lodge

Informing and educating the public is important

- We provide basic information on how and where to find parks in B.C. and what services and facilities are provided. We are also committed to interpretive programs in many parks, where displays, special events and printed materials are used to enhance visitor experiences.

  We also promote B.C. Parks and their use by residents. "Jerry the Moose", our ambassador, carries park information and education about wise use to the public.

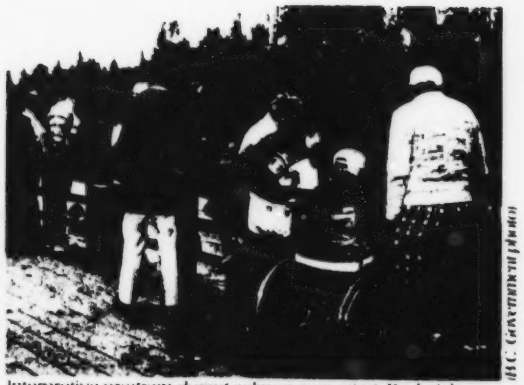
Contributing to the province's tourism industry is part of our mandate

- B.C. Parks are an essential part of the B.C. social and economic structure. We manage B.C. Parks to complement and strengthen tourism in British Columbia by providing world-class recreation opportunities for the enjoyment of residents and their visitors. In 1986, we hosted 17.4 million park visitors from every part of the world.

The private sector has a role in parks

- We encourage the involvement of the private sector and regulate the facilities and services they provide via permit. This is one way of fulfilling public demands for high quality services at lower costs. The range is from backcountry lodges, such as Mount Assiniboine Lodge, which offers a service which would not otherwise be available to the public; to contractors providing firewood, boat rentals, and even interpretive programs.

Park volunteer speaks to school children in Goldstream Park



Interpretive program during salmon spawning, Roderick Haig-Brown Recreation Area

Free, basic access to parks is provided

- While every resident supports B.C. Parks through taxes, basic access is free. Enhanced services, such as campgrounds and ski lodges, recover some of their costs through a user fee.

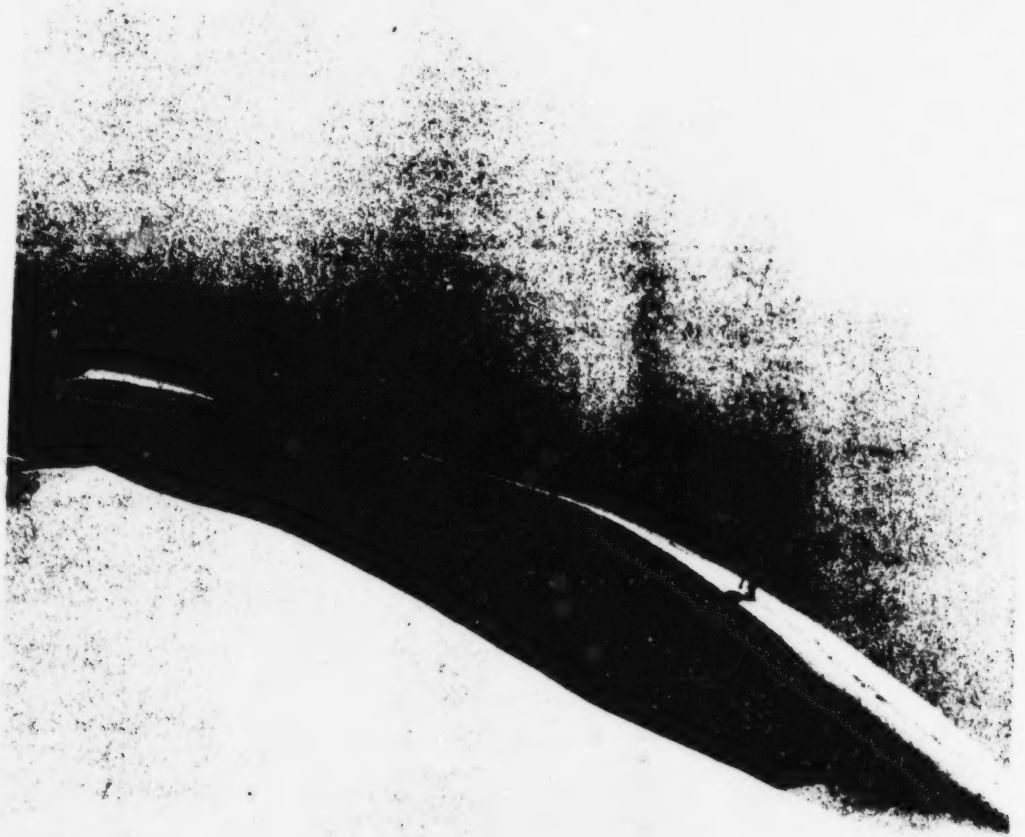
Volunteers are encouraged

- Volunteers have a role in provincial park management in several programs. Campground hosts, park ambassadors, and projects to develop and enhance park trails are some of the ways to become involved.

  We have a special commitment to helping youth participate in park projects. By providing job-creation and career-training opportunities we help prepare tomorrow's leaders for their future role in society.

Jerry the Moose and friends

3. FACING THE CHALLENGE AHEAD



Mount Robson, Mount Robson Park

(Credit: E. Cooper)

Goals for the Years Ahead

As B.C. Parks heads towards its centennial, it faces another challenging era.

Tourism is playing an ever-larger part in the provincial economy, and provincial parks have a pivotal role in providing spectacular outdoor recreation opportunities for visitors to enjoy. The resident population, too, is increasing, particularly in urban areas. Long-distance recreation trips remain popular. It is clear that British Columbians care about and want to spend much time experiencing the province's natural attractions.

In the last 25 years, we have seen the mountain bike, the sailboard, the river raft and the snowmobile revolutionize the ways in which we experience the outdoors. The pace of change is not slackening.

The challenge continues to be to provide enough parks and the right mix of recreation opportunities to serve these needs, while ensuring that natural values are conserved in perpetuity.

To focus and respond to these challenges, a planned approach is required. That's why we are now finalizing the Park System Plan and re-dedicating our efforts to ensure that every park has a long term management plan in place.

The first step in the plan is to define the goals for the location and extent of the parks themselves.

Our conservation goals are:

- *to protect examples of the most important representative natural landscapes of B.C.*, thereby keeping for posterity the characteristic combinations of flora, fauna, landforms and waters that give different parts of the province their flavour – and make this such an attractive place to live, work, and recreate.
- *to protect B.C.'s key recreation settings and most outstanding scenic features*, so that the park system contains a wide selection of the best outdoor spots, features, wilderness areas – our highest peaks, our best beaches, our highest waterfalls, and our rarest wildlife become a common heritage.

Our recreation goals are:

- *to provide parks that are major outdoor recreation destinations*, either as attractions in themselves, or to complement major tourist areas.
- *to provide parks along major travel corridors*, so that the touring public has a basic network of scenic stop-offs and facilities which complement those offered by other agencies and the private sector.
- *to provide parks for regional recreation in areas where other agencies cannot*, so that wherever one lives or visits in B.C., there is reasonable access to significant recreation environments.

(Credit D. Bryan)

A landscape recently added to the park system: Fiordland Recreation Area

(Credit D. Bryan)

Outstanding features, such as Helmcken Falls, Wells Gray Park, are protected within the park system. Other features remain to be added.

These goals indicate the ideal size and content for our park system. By defining the "representative landscapes" of B.C., we can see which are currently within the system. By identifying the province's most outstanding natural features, we can compare which are within park boundaries now, and which might be. And as new communities and transportation routes develop, we can locate new recreation opportunities, as was recently done when new parks were created along the Coquihalla Highway.

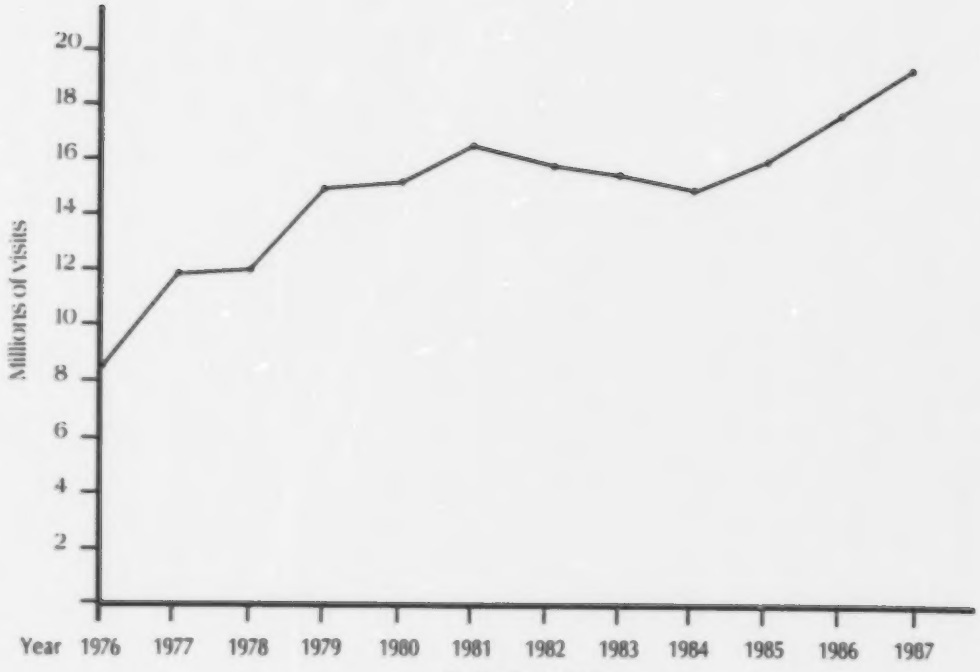
The next step in the system plan is to assess how well we are doing in our conservation/recreation roles to this point, and therefore what the implications are for the park system of the future.

So How Are We Doing?

In 1987, we took a major step forward. During this year, we added over 800,000 hectares of land in the form of 13 new Recreation Areas. Over 1 million hectares of land were upgraded to Class A Park. In the major parks with remaining legal resource commitments, the process to extinguish them has begun.

Of the 52 "representative landscapes" that make up B.C., about 32 are captured within existing parks. Of the province's most outstanding recreation and scenic features, only a few are not yet within the system. Currently, 5.3 percent of British Columbia is provincial park land.

On the conservation side, we have begun a province-wide assessment of recreational fisheries and grizzly bear management programs, setting the scene for future work. On a park-by-park basis, we are expanding our information about critical issues and developing management plans for particular species or habitats. It is now a priority to prepare a resource management plan for the park system, to set overall goals for managing our natural resources.



Park Attendance
1976-87

A range of parks represent the Okanagan in our park system. Kickininee and Sun-Oka Beach Parks.

Chilko Lake: a landscape not represented yet within the park system.

In terms of our recreation role, we are continuing to serve visitors with a wide range of facilities in outstanding recreational settings. After a decline in the early 1980s, park use has since increased consistently to over 19 million in 1987. Of the visitors who completed our satisfaction survey, 85 percent felt that we were doing a good-to-excellent job. This year and every year, we are talking to more and more people, including those who have not visited provincial parks, to discover what we can do to continue to improve in the future.

By continuing on the course charted by our system plan and current practises, how will B.C. Parks look and how will they be managed by the year 2011?

A Vision for the Future

When B.C. Parks celebrates its centennial, it will not be dramatically different from today – that is, in the size and the location of parks themselves. But the way in which these parks are managed and the way people are recreating will certainly change significantly.

The park system will be larger

By our centennial in 2011, we envision a system with acreage that is approximately 6 percent of B.C. with all the large-area parks added. Significantly, there will be more relatively small recreation parks located in such important landscapes as the Inside Passage, the northern Gulf Islands, and other parts of the coast. Waterfront parks which are accessible to urban populations will be highly-valued by society.

Parks will have close ties with society

B.C. Parks will play an even more crucial role by providing continued economic benefits to all of society as well as important leisure time opportunities.

In the next 25 years, new partnerships will be forged with community groups, non-profit organizations, the private sector and volunteer groups – to provide and maintain important park services, education and employment. Communities will be involved in both planning for and managing parks, adding to the vitality of B.C. Parks.

Our conservation role will be strengthened

Resource management plans will exist for all major parks. Our information about park resources and expertise in managing critical environments will increase, as changes beyond park boundaries necessitate more active management to protect habitats for animals such as the grizzly.

We expect to have resolved the historic legal resource tenures.

Recreation will take on new dimensions

The high standards of facilities and services will be maintained. As a result, visitation will exceed 20 million each year, with greater activity year-round. Expanded and more sophisticated facilities will be developed through partnerships with non-profit and for-profit interests.

New recreation pursuits, unimagined today, will be popular. Parks close to urban centres will be busiest; but although backcountry use will remain moderate, parks offering such opportunities will be more highly-prized and even more available.

How Do We Get There From Here?

The preparation and release of *Striking the Balance* is part of the continuing process of publicly assessing and aligning the parks system to the ever-changing needs of the province.

We invite your comments and look forward to finding solutions to both today's and tomorrow's challenges. Write to: Minister of Environment and Parks, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, British Columbia, V8V 1X4.

Cathedral Park

B.C. Government photo